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Fifty-eighth session

Item 8 of the provisional agenda

**QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE
OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE**

**Letter dated 13 August 2001 from the Permanent Observer for Palestine
to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights**

Israel, the occupying Power, keeps escalating its criminal war against the Palestinian people as well as its gross violations of the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the provisions of the two International Covenants on Human Rights, the principles and provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and international humanitarian law and also the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

I have the regret to inform you that Israel, the occupying Power, has committed yet other savage crimes against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem.

Monday, 23 July, 26-year-old Mustafa Yaseen from Aneen in the district of Jenin was assassinated in front of his wife and child. About 40 Israeli soldiers and Special Forces dressed in civilian clothes surrounded his house, called him out of the house, then they shot him in the chest and in his back.

Tuesday, 24 July, the Israeli forces assassinated 38-year-old Salah Darwaza from Nablus, by firing missiles down on his car from a helicopter gunship, as he drove along Haifa Road in Nablus, directly hitting the car and killing Darwaza instantly.

Sunday, 29 July 2001, large numbers of Israeli soldiers, police and border guards broke into the Holy Sanctuary in the heart of Jerusalem, fired live and metal bullets and teargas at unarmed worshippers, including elderly people and children, attacking them with batons, beating them severely and injuring 40 of them.

These incidents occurred while the Israeli forces were providing protection for Jewish extremists who were trying to place a 4.5-ton cornerstone symbolizing the building of a Jewish temple to replace the Muslim holy site. This illegal action, which was authorized by the Israeli high court, aims to alter the legal status and the religious and cultural character of occupied Jerusalem, in flagrant violation of relevant United Nations resolutions and the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949.

On that same day, the Israeli Government assassinated six Palestinian civilians who were killed in the City of Jenin, as part of its policy of targeted assassinations.

Tuesday, 31 July 2001, in a dangerous escalation of Israel's criminal war against the Palestinian people, and in its flagrant violation of the right to life, Israeli attack helicopters fired two rockets into an apartment building in downtown Nablus, killing eight Palestinians. Four individuals unconnected to any political actions, including two brothers aged 8 and 10, were killed in the attack. The missiles that struck the building were fired by two Apache helicopters that were seen at the time of the attack hovering over the southern area of Nablus. An additional 22 people were injured, including three individuals who are in critical condition.

The killing of innocent civilians could not have come as a surprise; the civil and military leadership which knowingly orders such attacks is committing acts of State terrorism, acts of terrorism distinguished from other kinds of terrorism only by the enormous firepower at the disposal of the Israeli Air Force.

In the light of this criminal war waged against the Palestinian civilian population, we appeal to the international community to intervene with the Government of Israel and call on this Government to put a halt to its crimes against Palestinian unarmed civilians, to its policy of collective punishments, strangulating a whole population, children, women and the elderly, and to hold Israeli officials and officers accountable for their war crimes perpetuated against the Palestinian people, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

We also reiterate our call to the international community to call for the immediate establishment of an international observer force for the protection of Palestinian civilians, as well as to ensure compliance of Israel with relevant United Nations resolutions, international law, international humanitarian law and existing Palestinian-Israeli agreements.

Regretfully, the number of Palestinians killed by the excessive and indiscriminate use of force by the Israeli occupying forces and by their illegal and criminal policy of extrajudicial killings continues to rise each day. In addition, many more Palestinian civilians have been injured, a large number of them seriously and permanently.

I am enclosing a list with the names of Palestinian martyrs for the period from 21 to 31 July to be added to the previous ones on the same subject.

I would be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex* distributed as an official document of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 8.

Signed: Nabil RAMLAWI
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.

23/7/2001

Annex

Ref'at Nahhal	15 years old	Gaza
Mustafa Yasin	26 years old	Jenin

25/7/2001

Salah Darwazeh	38 years old	Nablus
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28/7/2001

Fathi El-Alem	67 years old	Salfit
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29/7/2001

Abdulrahman Eshtewi	30 years old	Nablus
Hekmat Hammad	28 years old	Nablus
Maher Jawabreh	32 years old	Nablus
Mohammed Qassem	20 years old	Nablus
Amin Balaytah	25 years old	Nablus
Muneer Balaytah	27 years old	Nablus

31/7/2001

Jamal Mansour	42 years old	Nablus
Jamal Salim	43 years old	Nablus
Omar Mansour	27 years old	Nablus
Othman Qatnany	25 years old	Nablus
Faheem Dawabsheh	32 years old	Nablus
Mohammad Bishtawi	26 years old	Nablus
Bilal A. Khalil	6 years young	Nablus
Ashraf A. Khalil	9 years young	Nablus
Mohammad El-Husni	20 years old	Gaza
Hammodah Madhoun	23 years old	Gaza